## II.

## REPORT by Captain CAMPBELL WALKER, Staff Corps, Deputy Conservator of Forests, Madras, on ENGLISH and SCOTCH FORESTS, dated 15th March 1872.

### CROWN FORESTS.

Introductory.

THE Royal forests and woodlands which I have visited, on the authority of the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues, are the Windsor Great Park and Sandhurst Woods, the New Forest and Parkhurst Woods, and the Dean Forest and High Meadow Woods. The two former are not included in the summary of woods and plantations published in 1863, in which the total area or extent actually under timber in the woods and plantations is given at 51,606 acres, of which 11,923 are natural woods or planted before 1800, and the balance of 39,687 acres have been planted since 1800. Since 1863, a considerable extent must have been added to this area, and the Sandhurst Woods, if not those of Windsor Great Park, ought to be included.

Besides the forests visited by me, the above acreage includes the woods or plantations known respectively as Alice Holt, Woolmer, Bere, Delamere, Salcey, Hazleborough, and Chopwell, none of which, however, extend over 3,000 acres, the majority being only small pieces of 1,000 acres under crop.

The receipts from the New and Dean Forests, High Meadow, Bere, Alice Holt, Woolmer, and Delamere Woods, for the year 1870–71, aggregated 37,390*l.*, whilst the expenditure amounted to 22,230*l.* I did not obtain the figures for Salcey, Hazleborough, or Chopwell Woods, and Windsor Great Park cannot, as hereafter explained, be regarded from an ordinary financial point of view.

The bulk of the Crown forests consists of oak, which, however, particularly in the New Forest, is now gradually being replaced, when mature and felled, by the larch, Scotch fir, and other conifers.

The extensive oak plantations were made under the direction of successive Acts of Parliament, which in most cases expressly declare the object to be the providing a supply of oak timber for the navy. This necessity has now, to a great extent, ceased, as our "wooden walls" are things of the past, and teak is much preferred to oak for the backing of iron-

clads, the juice of the oak having, I am informed, an injurious effect on the iron, which is not found to be the case with the teak. The value of the oak bark has also much decreased of late years, owing to the adoption of other substances for tanning, and large imports of foreign bark.

Still the value of the timber in the Royal forests and woodlands must be very great. It was estimated in 1849 as 1,087,777*l.* for the enclosed plantations made since 1808 alone, and the value of the same plantations when at maturity was then estimated at 10,000,000*l.* If to this be added the woods and plantations which existed prior to 1808, and those which have been formed since 1849, it will give some idea of the valuable property administered by Her Majesty's Commissioners and the forest officers of the Crown.

It is, however, scarcely necessary to point out how much more valuable and deserving of care and attention is the forest property of the State in India, where the extent may be considered as miles for acres, on the most moderate computation, and the climatic considerations and the agricultural wants of the people give to the subject of forest conservancy a special interest beyond what it demands in this country, where the climate is temperate, rain-fall plentiful, and iron and coal take the place of wood for many purposes to which the latter is adapted, and for which, in fact, it forms the sole resource in India.

I beg here to express my thanks to the Deputy surveyors of the several forests, their assistants, and all with whom I have had the honour of being officially brought into contact during my visits to the forests, for their kindness and civility, and the anxiety which they have uniformly evinced to afford me every information and assistance in their power, even, I fear, in some cases, to their own inconvenience and discomfort. I cannot too strongly express my appreciation of the kind manner in which I was received as a brother forester.

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## Windsor Great Park and Sandhurst Woods.

I went round these woods with Mr. Menzies, the deputy surveyor, but as they are avowedly more ornamental than profitable I do not purpose submitting any detailed report on them.

*Oak Woods.*—The plantations in the park are mainly oak, which attains a great size; of late years there has been considerable planting of *coniferæ* in clumps for ornamental purposes.